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361 554 [157] [123] Caño dwellers are self-conscious; they entertain less and are reluctant to have visitors. I was never invited or encouraged to visit a *caño* dwelling house. I was always told that they did not care to have visitors.

342 361 622 768 When a headman dies his house is ordinarily abandoned and the new headman undertakes to build a new maloca, since one requirement of the office is his ability to enlist his sibmates in working with him. Abandonment of a house, however, changes mainly the outlines of the clearing if a new site is chosen for the new maloca. A new maloca may be built alongside the old, in which case there is no change at all. Sometimes the new headman decides that the old site was the victim of evil forces and a new clearing is built. But against such a fear is the desire not to abandon still-productive manioc plantations.

361 244 768 At all events, a new clearing is normally close enough to the old to ease the transition from last harvest to new harvest. When a site is moved the last harvest is drawn from the old, and cuttings from the old *chagra* (plantation) are planted in the new. Thus there is a transitional period when the community is actually working both clearings. The Cubeo regard this transition period as a difficult one, and until they are drawing a bitter manioc harvest from the new clearing they will be too preoccupied to hold drinking parties. Fruit trees on the old *chagra* are harvested as long as they bear fruit.

361 [311] The extent of a community's territory is such that it will be able to circulate within it more or less permanently, reoccupying after some 15 years land that has become reforested and so workable again. Boundaries are along a river only. Past the line of cultivation the forest is an undifferentiated darkness.

[173] The traditions of the Cubeo indicate that they were originally dwellers along the Vaupés, the main stream, and that they later moved up the smaller tributaries such as the Cuduiarí and the Querarí. The present distribution of sibs is also interesting in this

361 614 554 connection in that high-ranking sibs live along the main stream or along the mouths of the tributaries, whereas the lower-ranking sibs occupy the headwaters of smaller streams. Sib status is definitely associated with location along a river. The back reaches of creeks deep in the forests are the refuge of the weak, whereas the strong occupy a stretch of river that has majesty either by sweep of water or by the character of its rapids. The main site of a sib that has become dispersed is always in a conspicuous part of a river whereas Satellites and Independents often move up small creeks. Father Antonio Giacone of the Salesian Mission has observed that the Tucano (refer-

361 554 ring to the tribe) never constructed their malocas in creeks but only along the main river. Occupying the main streams, he noted, they

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regarded themselves as the superior of all other Indians who were driven back into the headwaters (Giacone, 1949, p. 5).

Thus the movement of Colombian settlers down the Vaupés River had a markedly disturbing effect upon the Cubeo by dispossessing them from their ancestral river. The first-ranking sibs, however, did not leave their sites at the rapids from whence their ancestors are supposed to have emerged. But in staying on they succumbed most rapidly to the European influence.

Despite their strong orientation toward the river the Cubeo also make use of footpaths. Near the mouth of the Cuduiarí, for example, a trail leads to the Querarí. There are, in fact, many paths in the region that provide short cuts between rivers. Raiding parties come on foot to avoid detection, and paths are used for short journeys. The Cubeo Indian, however, is not, by preference, a walker.

SIZE

The size of a clearing is variable, to a degree, depending upon the number of households and their ambitions for entertaining and for trade with the whites. A headman's household, which is always the most ambitious and is, therefore, the most productive, requires approximately two acres of manioc land for an annual yield of 400 baskets (50–60 pounds per basket). Most households among the *Bahúkina* averaged only 200 baskets of manioc a year and utilized accordingly a manioc garden of one acre. A sib center community of 12 households requires more than 12 acres for manioc cultivation as well as several acres more for the plaza and subsidiary cultivations, if the full burden of entertaining is left to one or two households, as is often the case. Satellite communities are often as small as three households and their clearings are proportionately smaller.

The Cubeo community is always small, rarely reaching a population beyond 16 households, a household in every case being limited to a nuclear family. The size of community seems to be a result of a complex series of adaptations of many elements to one another — architectural, ecological, sociological, and psychological. The architectural factor is that a community must be dominated by a single maloca. The largest maloca in the Northwest Amazon region is a 16-household dwelling with eight compartments ranged along each long wall. The smaller dwellings of the Independents can augment the size of a community. The fact is, however, that an Independent household has usually been formed for personal reasons, such as a quarrel with the headman, rather than for reasons of crowding.

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592 the headman, rather than for reasons of crowding. The Cubeo believe that one roof unites a community while several roofs divide it.

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311 Size of maloca is adapted in some measure to cultivable terrain. We have already noted that seasonal flooding and the requirement of good river frontage limit the availability of land for relatively permanent cultivation. But these are highly variable factors. Along the Vaupés, a deep river basin that can carry a great volume of water, there are vast stretches of dry land that have become the sites of civilized population centers. There is no doubt that from terrain alone the Vaupés could have supported far greater Indian populations than it did at the time of first contact. Along the Vaupés the limiting factor seems to have been social. On the Cuduiarí, on the other hand, land contours are such as to divide frontages into much smaller segments. On this smaller stream, terrain has been a more significant factor in limiting community size. But even on the Cuduiarí, land utilization is
[614] subject to strong social considerations. One consideration is that sibs must retain their traditional boundaries. This means that with slash-burn horticulture the sib territory must provide, as a minimum, a three-step cycle in which a community returns to its original land after 10 to 15 years. The well-situated tract must then be at least three times the average land requirement at any given time.

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244 There is still another consideration, and that is the distance of manioc gardens from the residence. When they prepare a clearing, the Cubeo bear in mind the distance a woman will have to trudge with her burdens of manioc, a baby, and firewood. That is why the gardens are laid out along a semicircle. Bitter manioc is a cumbersome crop. It needs reasonably dry soil and it makes heavy demands upon the time and energy of a woman for its cultivation, transportation, and preparation. Whatever can be saved from travel time is an advantage.

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182 The thesis of ecological adaptation, however, can be argued most successfully in the abstract. If one notes the actual events in the life of a community, then the processes of community growth and community fission appear in quite a different light. The balance of forces of fusion and of fission that hold community size to its stable limits in harmony with the natural environment are not entirely economic. They often include personal factors. To state this more precisely: the economic factor affects fusion strongly but has less direct bearing upon fission. Satellites, for example, are urged to return to the fold, guests
[578] are urged to stay on, and daughters are invited to take up residence in their own sib if there is ample land. Splitting, on the other hand, occurs because of personal quarrels and rarely because of a feeling of land shortage.